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challenge



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Genocide in Fallujah Follows Hitler's Footsteps:

MASSACRE FOR OIL PROFITS



Ontario, Canada— Tens of thousands demon- strated against Bush and the war in Iraq .

Class-consciousness has temporarily sunk so low that the U.S. military's continuing atrocities are not provoking the mass outrage they deserve. The media's sanitized coverage of the war zones explains a minor aspect of this passivity. With pro-war reporters embedded with the troops and pictures of carnage banned, many people don't comprehend the sheer terror of the U.S.'s genocidal wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Millions aren't demonstrating against U.S. rulers' war crimes mainly because there's no mass working-class movement attacking capitalism as the root of imperialist war.

The Progressive Labor Party has this class-based outlook. We led hundreds in demonstrations and forums protesting the Abu Ghraib torture. We can and must lead many times more. The U.S. war machine provides endless opportunities to expose the essential deadliness of the profit system and to organize where we work, live and go to school.

Last month, a U.S. Marine executed a wounded, unarmed prisoner at a mosque in Fallujah. The British newspaper, the Independent 11/24), confirmed that such

wanton murder, ordered by the brass and fueled by racism, is standard operating procedure for U.S. troops in Iraq. It's worth citing at length:

"Allegations of widespread abuse by U.S. forces in Fallujah, including the killing of unarmed civilians and the targeting of a hospital in an attack, have been made by people who have escaped from the city. They said that as well as deaths from bombs and artillery shells, a large number of people including children were killed by American snipers. U.S. forces refused repeated calls for medical aid for injured civilians, they said....

"The refugees from Fallujah describe a situation of extreme violence.... Men of military age were particularly vulnerable. But there are accounts of children as young as four, and women and old men being killed....The claims of abuse and killings, from different sources, appear, however, to follow a consistent pattern.

"Dr. Ali Abbas, who arrived in Baghdad from Fallujah four days ago, worked at a clinic in the city which was bombed by the Americans....Dr. Abbas, 28, said: 'We had

five people under treatment and they were killed....We contacted the doctors at the Fallujah hospital and said how bad the situation was. We wanted them to evacuate the more badly injured and send drugs and more doctors. They tried to do that, but they said the Americans stopped them. One of the things we noticed the most were the numbers of people killed by American snipers. They were not just men

but women and some children as well. The youngest one I saw was a four-year-old boy. Almost all these people had been shot in the head, chest or neck.'

"The family of Aziz Radhi Tellaib was killed before the battle for Fallujah began. He had been driving them to Ramadi to visit relations when the car was hit by fire

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WRITE TO SOLDIERS WHO RESISTED

For those readers who would like to write to the soldiers of the 343rd Quartermaster Company who refused orders to deliver contaminated fuel on what they described as a "suicide mission," the following are the names of some and the address to which letters should be sent (no later than the end of January).

Spc. Amber McClenny; Spc. Major Coates; Sgt. Larry O. McCook; Spc. Scott Shealy; Spc. Adam Gordon; Sgt. Justin Rogers; Sgt. Peter Sullivan; Spc. Desmond Jones; Sgt. Michael Butler.

**343rd QM
Tallil AB
APO AE 09331**

Workers and Youth Should Protest U.S. Rulers' War Crimes

continued from front page

from an American Humvee....Mr. Tellaib freed himself but could not save the rest of the family. Those who died included Mr. Tellaib's wife Ahlam, 26; his sons Omar, seven, and Barat, three, and his daughter Zainab. Also killed were his niece Rokyab, 26, her three-year-old son Fadhi, and three-month-old daughter Farah.

"Mr. Tellaib, 33, a merchant, said: 'We were stopped, in a line of cars, by some Humvees which had overtaken us. One soldier waved us forward, but as I drove up there was firing from another Humvee. I was shot in the side of the head, and my wife and elder son were shot in the chest. I think they must have died then....'

"Rahim Abdullah, 46, a teacher, said that anyone in the street was regarded by the Americans as the enemy. 'I was trying to get to my uncle's house, waving a piece of white cloth as we had been advised when they started shooting at me. I saw two men being shot. They were just ordinary people. The only way to stay alive was to stay inside and hope your house did not get hit by a shell.'"

Lancet, the British medical journal, estimated that U.S. forces had killed 100,000 Iraqi civilians before the current massacre in Fallujah. One eyewitness said that U.S. troops typically retaliated for car-bombings by torching civilian homes. And even the ultra-imperialist New York Times reports (11/27) that "400,000 Iraqi children are badly malnourished, and suffering in some cases from irreversible physical and mental stunting."

Organizing against these crimes opens the way for Party-building. We can kick out military recruiters

who seek to transform young workers into cold-blooded murderers of their class brothers and sisters. We can expose phony union hacks, who join with bosses in backing U.S. imperialism. We can support striking workers fighting pay cuts that fund the rulers' war effort. We can attack politicians who shift funds from social services into war, even as they demand more cops and prisons.

We must understand, however, that nothing short of a revolution of millions of workers united in a communist Party — the PLP — will bring the war criminals to justice. We may still be far from that goal, with a long, hard road ahead. But our Party can and will grow until our class achieves it. ☸



All the Mirages Fit to Print

N.Y. Times' columnist David Brooks wrote (11/26) how "prosperity is booming all over the world." Sure, if he's talking about Bill Gates, Carlos Slim (Mexican telecommunication boss), Halliburton, Exxon, Toyota or the rising Chinese bourgeoisie. For the rest of the world, misery is booming. (Brooks should look out his window from his posh office onto Times Square and see the homeless.)

Shortly after Brooks' column, the same paper reported that the AIDS epidemic has driven life expectancy in Africa back to the level of the 1800's. At the same time, French professor Pierre Crawn of the International Organization of Chemical Scientists teaching in Luanda, reporting on the impact of malnutrition in Asia, Africa and Latin America, said that 14 million children die each year in the poor countries because of preventable diseases, hunger and wars. (Granma, Havana, 12/1)

What's behind this mass murder of children? Capitalism and imperialism. The world's imperialists and their local boss-servants in the poorest countries are the only ones enjoying the "prosperity" of well-paid misinformers David Brooks.

Warm Welcome for China's Bo\$\$\$e\$; Chile Reception for Bush

Bush was "welcomed" to Santiago, Chile, by thousands protesting his criminal war in Iraq. "Socialist" President Lagos' cops responded in fascist Pinochet style, brutally attacking the demonstrators, using live bullets. Many were injured and arrested.

Bush came to APEC (Asian-Pacific Economic Forum) with his unchangeable and failed agenda of unilateral imperialism. As we reported previously, the former chief of the Southern U.S. Military Command had warned Bush and Congress of the danger of "radical populism" in Latin America. But Bush's only alternative is including Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela and Cuba in his "axis of evil," while Chile and Mexico are in his "axis of good." But now it appears Bush may have to include most of Latin America in his "axis of evil."

Bush's visit was overshadowed by China's growth in U.S. imperialism's domain. Guy De Jonquist wrote in the London Financial Times (11/19) about the "inexorable economic ascendancy of China," replacing U.S. leadership in APEC. A front-page New York Times (11/20) article reported that "while the U.S. may still regard the region as its backyard, its dominance is no longer unquestioned. Suddenly, the presence of China can be felt everywhere, from the backwaters of the Amazon to mining camps in the Andes."

China has used its growing wealth (based on the super-exploitation of Chinese workers) to buy everything from Chile's copper (replacing the U.S. as number-one buyer), to Bolivia's tin, Venezuela's oil, Brazil's iron ore and other natural resources, to nickel from Cuba. When the small Caribbean island of Dominica broke relations with Taiwan,



China responded with \$116 million in aid. China's bosses use only 6% of their US\$500 billion in reserve to pay for its investments. It might increase this practice, fearing to compensate for the rapid fall of the dollar.

China's bosses understand the world situation very well. They know they must prepare for an inevitable war against the U.S. and/or other imperialists. Meanwhile, more Latin American bosses, though as anti-working class as the imperialists, are rushing to break from the U.S.'s unilateral squeeze. However, workers must be very careful. Some fake leftists and others are trying to win workers to side with other imperialists and local bosses against U.S. imperialism. Workers can only expect more exploitation and misery from any side in this capitalist dogfight. Our only side is with the international working class, which must fight for a society without any bosses

— communism.

Mexico's Bosses Side with Bush

Before the APEC summit, Mexico's Secretary of Energy, Fernando Elizondo (linked to the Monterrey capitalist group), had given the U.S. Northern Command the right to exploit "Project Mexico's" oil fields. But most Latin American rulers don't want to follow President Fox's pro-U.S. line (similar to previous Mexican Presidents Zedillo and Salinas). There are also powerful sections of Mexico's bosses who want a bigger share of PEMEX, the world's seventh largest oil company.

In the energy field, China — Brazil's second largest trading partner after the European Union — is investing heavily in Latin America. Argentina and China have signed a \$20 billion deal to develop oil and gas fields and to build railroads. But these deals won't make much difference for workers in Argentina, who, like those in Brazil and the rest of Latin America, have seen their wages and standard of living drop in recent years. There are already many strikes in Brazil for higher wages and against cutbacks. But Lula, the former autoworkers' union leader elected as President "of the workers," has proven himself to be the "President" of the Sao Paulo bourgeoisie, Latin America's most powerful capitalist group.

Again, workers have no "friends in high places" in the capitalist world. But we need more than mass militant strikes; we need to turn those struggles into schools for communism and fight to smash all the bosses. That's PLP's goal. ☸

WHAT WE FIGHT FOR

☸PLP fights to smash capitalism—wage slavery. While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions all over the world. The Soviet Union and China returned to capitalism because socialism maintained too many aspects of the profit system, like wages and divisions of labor.

☸Capitalism inevitably leads to wars. PLP organizes workers, students and soldiers to turn these wars into a revolution for communism. This fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat requires a mass Red Army led by the communist PLP.

☸Communism means working collectively to build a society where sharing is based on need. We will abolish work for wages, money and profit. Everyone will share society's benefits and burdens.

☸Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of race.

☸Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women workers.

☸Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

☸Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers.

JOIN US!



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Workers' Contract Demand:

No Cuts Due to Iraq Oil War

I've been organizing for PLP on my present job for almost 25 years, and a union delegate for 20 years. Capitalism's attacks on workers get worse and worse. The decades of Party work have created a momentum and dynamic that continues to provide growing opportunities. Some examples:

I have a new young black co-worker, a nursing student at the school where my wife and I met over 20 years ago. It so happens the Party led a major campaign against the racist, anti-working class restrictions at that school. He's also a vet who was stationed in Kuwait. His brother (who I know) is in Iraq now. I just got him his first CHALLENGE.

Then there's the African worker who asked me who I was voting for. "I don't vote," I told him. "I'm a revolutionary. I like the ideas of communism." His eyes widened and I expected a negative response. But instead he told me excitedly, "I also like the ideas of communism! I wanted to get books on communism, but I didn't have the time!" He also just got his first CHALLENGE.

Finally, and most strikingly, at a recent union meeting the union leaders and the union delegates were reviewing demands

submitted by the membership for our contract negotiations this summer. The delegates were divided by job title into small groups. We were to assemble a unified contract-demand list from the individual sheets turned in by the workers of each job title.

Each group had a secretary who read the demands aloud to the group. At one point our group's secretary suddenly smiled and

years and most aren't shy about telling me to stick my head up my ass. My particular group included an ex-Marine Corps Sergeant and a Vietnam War vet.

To my surprise, everyone looked thoughtfully at each other and said, "O.K." This wasn't an "O.K." just to appease me, but rather more of an expression of actual agreement. "Hmmm," I thought, "Something different's going on

intimidating and had already given some of the other delegates a hard time.

"Don't worry," I said to the secretary, "I'll read it." Then came a deep voice, "No, I'll read it!" It was the Vietnam vet. This black brother took the paper and read the anti-Iraq war cuts demand. He finished by declaring, "I hate this war!"

The room was silent. The union leader stared at me, poker-faced. I spoke briefly, repeating the same argument I had made to our smaller group. Again the union leader stared at me. I waited for the usual brush-off or attack.

"So how would we phrase this?" the union leader asked. "No cuts due to the Iraq War?" Some of the union delegates and I quickly figured out the wording and the union leader jotted it down on the official demands list. "Hmmm," I thought, "Something's different here."

The union leaders have not changed. They're still loyal to capitalism and their mission is to keep the working class chained to the system. What's changed are the workers and the Party's relationships with them. Our next step is to organize the workers into a real campaign against our war contract. ☸

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looked at me. "No cuts due to the Iraq oil war," she read. "I wonder who this is from?" Everyone laughed and looked at me.

In a friendly way I argued why it was important to include such a political demand. I expected some negative feedback. I've known some of these folks for

here."

Then it came time for our group's Secretary to read our demands aloud to the entire meeting. She went through the list then abruptly stopped and shyly looked at me. I knew she was a little afraid to read the demand about the Iraq war. The union leader chairing the meeting can be very

Debate on How to Fight Fascism

NEW YORK CITY — A Veterans Day forum on the Patriot Act and Homeland Security, held in a church here, dealt with the issue of whether or not we are living in an era of developing fascism. A debate exposed the difference between those fighting to destroy the capitalist system — as the root cause of all the racist attacks on the working class — and building a worker-run society free of profits, and the liberals who often call themselves radicals but are really only advocating reforms of a system that can't be reformed. By not identifying capitalism as the source of the Patriot Act police state and of oil-driven imperialist war, many of these liberal reformers deliver us into the arms of the fascists.

The three panelists, all women, included Lynne Stewart, a civil rights lawyer currently on trial accused of "aiding terrorism"; an anti-racist, anti-fascist community organizer and a lawyer from the New York Civil Liberties Union. The community organizer exposed the current fascist nature of capitalism. Ms. Stewart told the audience to "resist, resist, resist, resist." Only the liberal NYCLU lawyer presented no alternative program to fight the attacks of the ruling class — just trust the system, a nationalist belief in "your country" and "your constitution."

Ms. Stewart outlined her case, how prosecutors are now going after lawyers to stop them from vigorously defending their clients, setting the stage to deny any rights to anyone opposed to the government's fascist policies. She exposed a double standard, how Martha Stewart's publicity agent and lawyer were allowed to transmit messages for her, but how her client — accused of terrorism — was barred from having a press release sent to Reuters. She's threatened with 40 years in prison.

The community organizer detailed the intensifying fascist repression under U.S. imperialism and its increasing racist nature, tracing the cause to capitalist competition over oil. She said we must fight back by spreading ideas within all organizations in the community. She confided later that she feared there might be a strong reaction to her use of the terms "fascism," "capitalism" and "imperialism,"

but said that where action is necessary we must be prepared to stand up to disagreement to help people understand what's really happening.

After two speakers from the floor exposed the current growth of fascism, the NYCLU lawyer objected to the classification, saying it was not so, and that to identify it as fascism would alienate many.

The audience listened with an open and eager ear. They were looking for answers, despite fear of terrorist attack and of the homeland security police. PLP's ideas to put workers in power are the only alternative to the hopelessness and powerlessness generated by the bosses and their media. A real struggle of ideas emerged, between acceptance of the more repressive conditions versus struggling against them. The audience raised questions about the Hart-Rudman report, how the Patriot Act could get passed so quickly for so large a document, about the GI's who are refusing to fight, about military recruiters in the schools, and about future expectations.

The liberals' answer — to fight against abuses to the Constitution and Bill of "Rights," one struggle after another — does virtually nothing to stop the rise of fascist repression, declining living standards, mass racist unemployment and oil wars. The ruling class always suspends constitutional "rights" when threatened, even in so-called "liberal" times. Liberal reforms are then whittled away — welfare, social security, the social safety net — amid the rulers' drive for maximum profits.

A week later the Church organized a demonstration against the war and the Patriot Act in front of Brooklyn's State Supreme Court building. Despite the rain, 40 people turned out to protest, carrying banners and signs demanding an end to the war, better housing, more jobs, attacking fascist repression and labeling capitalism as the problem. We must help people understand that the longer we remain inactive, the more repression the ruling class will get away with. ☸

Navy's Rules Help Bosses Rule

Recently, the Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer addressed all the new sailors aboard our ship. I was skeptical, but thought I'd give him a chance to present his overview. The Officer is a 21-year Navy veteran and is currently a Chief (Chief/E7 is the rank most enlisted members achieve over their entire military careers).

A native of South Georgia, he experienced racism first hand in boot camp when he entered the military. He related an incident where a white recruit, bunked on the top rack, refused to sleep at night because he believed this black recruit and his comrades would cut his throat. The EO officer used this to stress how the media and society perpetuate stereotypes. As a young sailor, he also encountered racism in Spain. I thought he made some decent points.

Later he talked about "race" and ethnicity. He asked us, "What is 'race'?" I said "race" was constructed by the U.S. ruling class to divide and control white and black workers. It turns out this was not the correct answer for the U.S. Navy!

According to the Navy, a person can belong to whatever "race" they want. He said Osama bin Laden, Saddam Hussein and George Bush can all belong to the same "race." The better point is that Bush, bin Laden and Hussein all belong to the same class (the bosses) and are all enemies of the working class.

The EO officer also briefed us on how to file discrimination and sexual harassment complaints. The final word on one's complaint is the Commanding Officer (the ship's Captain). What if the Captain ruled a discrimination or sexual harassment complaint was invalid? He said the sailor could file a grievance to a higher level, but stressed that the appeal would more than likely be overruled. An honest man! Truly no hope.

He later asked the sailors what happened to the Indians once they encountered the pilgrims. I am sure the EO officer was not expecting all the sailors to respond that they were KILLED! He "corrected" us, saying they were "moved" to reservations, ignoring the genocidal character of this act. I found the class's response encouraging — a sign of our potential to expose ruling-class ideology even in the Navy.

Ultimately, the EO officer reinforced the idea that the ruling class has taken the best from the Civil Rights, Feminists and even LGBT movements (the Navy has a policy toward treatment of gays and lesbians), in order to strengthen their drive towards being the number one imperialist.

This presentation showed the danger of reform — the ruling class using honest reform advocacy for its own goals. Only when we build a working-class-movement that smashes the construct of "race" and identity and the bosses' state will the world's workers truly be empowered. All Power to the Workers!

Navy Red

PL'ers Oppose Giving Amnesty to U.S. Imperialism



COLLEGE PARK, MD, Nov. 13 — PLP members and friends lost a resolution demanding immediate removal of U.S. troops from Iraq but won the struggle to expose liberal reformers to dozens of students who listened intently to our communist alternative at the Mid-Atlantic region of Amnesty International (AI). The meeting here at the University of Maryland campus discussed human rights issues and the future of this movement. PLP members at two universities have worked in AI to win human rights activists to a revolutionary communist outlook, generating a small base of students and activists within the organization.

This group attended several workshops

— on women's rights, environmental issues, racial profiling, the death penalty, and the humanitarian crisis in Darfur. Information gained there laid the basis for sharper discussions.

At day's end, a resolutions session allowed members to vote and recommend policy to the organization at large. PLP influenced introduction of an emergency resolution calling for immediate removal of U.S. troops from Iraq due to the inability of the U.S. to stop committing human rights violations. The flattening of Fallujah, inducing thousands of civilian deaths, was compared to the destruction of the town of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War, 1936-39, by Nazi Luftwaffe

pilots flying for dictator Franco. The Spanish painter, Pablo Picasso, chronicled this attack in his historic painting, *Guernica* (photo left).

We knew this resolution would lead to a big fight. As a matter of policy, AI doesn't oppose war, nor does it take sides in armed conflict. It advocates only that parties "respect" human rights during wars — an untenable and hypocritical position in an age of imperialist aggression. Moreover, AI is very sensitive to its "donor base" of major foundations and rich liberals. So both liberals and conservatives attacked the resolution.

Conservatives attacked it for being too radical. One AI high school student from Fairfax County (the nation's richest county) — in a remarkable piece of doublethink — said AI should work with the Bush Administration as the only feasible way to reduce human rights violations! Liberals attacked the resolution, saying it wouldn't work and would thus damage AI's credibility, reducing donor contributions. They said the masses lack the power to compel the U.S. to withdraw; therefore, we should focus only on individual violations.

However, our base was bold in its fight. Six students spoke vigorously for the resolution. One from Howard University (who previously felt the U.S. should stay in Iraq

to "clean up the mess" it had made) clearly saw through the hypocrisy of the liberals and conservatives, saying that staying in Iraq was like telling a woman whose husband had beaten her within an inch of her life to "stick with her man" and maybe he'd change. A Penn State student declared that the entire world sees the U.S. with blood dripping from its hands, that failing to support the resolution would lead the world to think that AI also had blood on its hands — and that they would be right!

We lost the vote (25-44) but won the struggle by exposing to our base the limits of liberal reform, as well as the only real alternative to liberal/conservative reform — communism and the PLP. Immediately afterwards, we had a sit-down meeting with seventeen friends and supporters, distributing CHALLENGE and depicting the communist world we hope to build.

Feedback and questions continued for forty-five minutes. People were pumped and ready to learn and act. The discussion carried over to a late-night dinner. Building this base and struggling led to this modest growth of our revolutionary movement, even as AI's reputation as a "bold" human rights organization was diminished forever in the minds of dozens of students. ☸

Link War to Union-Busting, Budget Cuts at Community Colleges

BELMONT, MA, Nov. 6 — "Romney Says Cut back, We Say Fight Back!" chanted 40 community college faculty and students, as they marched through the quiet streets of this wealthy Belmont neighborhood, boldly taking our message to the Governor's house. Our union chapter at Roxbury Community College enabled faculty and students to express their anger at this fascist's union-busting, budget-cutting tactics. It pushed the MCCC (Massachusetts Community College Council) to rely on the members and respond more militantly to anti-union attacks.

Progressive Labor Party helped create a rank-and-file spirit for this militant action and fostered student participation, which generated sparks of life and enthusiasm. In addition, PLP linked the budget cuts to the war in Iraq, attempting to deepen political consciousness.

With Governor Romney at the helm, the State's ruling class aims to transform public higher education into institutions in better sync with imperialism's needs. By streamlining courses and programs (while cutting full-time faculty), they hope to produce better-trained workers for Massachusetts industry as cheaply and quickly as possible. Above all, they need the military to have an open door for recruiting.

The main obstacles to this agenda are firstly the faculty/staff unions, which intend to protect our interests, even though it's within the limit of narrow trade unionism. Secondly are the many faculty, staff and even some administrators who are committed to giving students a real education, not just job training. This stark contradiction

between what the ruling class wants and what faculty holds dear has led Romney to try to bust our unions.

The immediate spark for the march was Romney's veto of a bill that would fund the raises of thousands of higher ed employees. Simultaneously, he raised the salaries of the State's 3,000 managers by up to 7.5%. Romney strategy is to make our unions seem impotent and unable to deliver even what the contract has negotiated. If he succeeds, he's one step closer to destroying the unions altogether.

In addition, he's hell bent on "solving" the state budget crisis on the backs of workers and students, funneling more of the public budget into corporate pockets. Public higher education here has been cut 26% since 2001. This has increased fees 50%, forcing many students out of school completely. Last year, the State spent more on prisons than on higher education, reflecting growing fascism.

For several decades, the MCCC's collaborationist strategy has fostered the illusion that the college administrations and the Democratic Party can be our "friends" if we play politics skillfully. This has obliterated class-consciousness and weakened the unions. Winning the professors and their allies to march and picket against one of their class enemies has started the ball rolling towards the kind of militancy needed to defend ourselves.

This action laid the basis for developing closer ties with the faculty and students, as the struggle continues. ☸

Workers Grasp Source of Bosses' Profits, Sparking Fight-Back

LOS ANGELES — "If we need four tomatoes, that's how many we'll produce. That's what Tom thinks," a worker concluded as I walked into the lunchroom.

I quickly got involved in the ongoing discussion, one I think resulted from a PLP leaflet distributed a few days before. The leaflet exposed how the bosses steal the surplus value we produce, explaining that the pants we produce have both use value and exchange value. The exchange value creates the profits for the bosses but leaves millions worldwide without enough clothes. Use value, on the other hand, represents workers' needs. The leaflet concluded that our goal is a communist society where only use value exists — production to meet the needs of the international working class, not the imperialist capitalist bosses.

On the back of the leaflet were photographs of the pants we made in the factory and their prices in the stores. When the workers saw how much profit the bosses make off the pants, it caused a big commotion.

"Yes," I answered, "it's about a different system in which everyone will be able to meet their needs. We all wouldn't get exactly the same because we all don't have the same exact needs. For example, maybe five tortillas satisfies Juan's hunger; maybe Jose needs 10; but Jesus needs only one. Each would get different amounts but all three would satisfy their hunger, would have their needs met. That's what communism will mean."

Another worker explained, "Let's say we produced only tortillas. Then our factory would have tortillas for everyone."

"That's right," I said. "But under this capitalist system the rich keep most of the value we produce. We receive only the bare essentials needed to survive. It's absurd."

"Well," interjected another worker, "we

must remember that we haven't studied. Those who have studied need to earn more."

"Not true," I declared. "In human terms, that's absurd. A rich person needs the same as a poor person in order to live. Both the intellectual and the worker need a home in which to live. We must understand who's more important for society."

"Yes," said another worker. "If this were a tortilla factory, we'd be making tortillas from the corn produced by the farm workers. But the lawyers, for example, what do they produce?"

"Yes, we're the most indispensable because we produce everything of value. We don't need the bosses. They're parasites who don't work and who live by sucking our sweat and blood. We don't need production for profit, only for use value to meet the needs of the international working class. Intellectuals don't deserve more than us. There would be no special privileges for anybody. We would all contribute according to our commitment and receive based on our need."

"This sounds good. We should support Tom because we're all workers," concluded a quality control worker who always participates in our discussions.

The day the leaflet was distributed, one woman worker — citing the huge profits the bosses make on the pants — said, "This makes me so mad. I have to be so humble just to ask for a penny increase in the piece rate for an operation. Next time I won't be humble!"

Referring to the Party leaflet, another worker said, "I'm saving this to use when we need to fight against piece-rate cuts." Many workers carefully folded the leaflet and put it in their pockets to keep. ☸

SAN SALVADOR, EL SALVADOR

Communist Politics: Best Tool for Teachers' Struggle

In a few weeks, the National Convention of the Teachers' Union ("ANDES June 21") will meet to elect a new Executive Committee (EC). The 2003 convention was attended by only 600 of the 14,000 members. "It does me no good to participate," said one teacher, "because they won't make any real changes in favor of teachers."

Members view Arnaldo Vaquerano — who's been running the union for two years — as just an opportunist who will remain in power even if a new EC is chosen. There are 18,000 unemployed teachers in El Salvador, meaning 630,000 children are denied these teachers' services. Contrary to hacks like Vaquerano and the system he serves. PLP teachers are bringing communist politics to the teachers, uniting with their students and parents to fight both for a decent education and against the rotten conditions which impoverish and alienate our students.

Rather than hire the unemployed, the rulers take advantage of teachers' low wages by forcing them to work a second shift for one-third the salary. We must launch a militant fight for higher salaries and jobs for unemployed teachers, while showing how education under communism will serve the entire working class, not just a few bosses' needs for cheap, semi-skilled labor.

Historically the teachers union has played an important role in national politics. Unfortunately, it's always been

used to support leaders and organizations which, at best, want to reform the unreformable — capitalism — and, even worse, fight openly to keep the working class under the yoke of the bosses' system.

Organizations from countries like Norway and Brazil and those in the European Union give money to "ANDES June 21." This promotes their influence in fighting for control over what has been the backyard of U.S. imperialism. It also helps guarantee a corrupt and pro-capitalist union leadership, blinding teachers to communist ideas. Vaquerano uses teachers' dues and invitations from these bosses to take trips — with his wife — to Europe and throughout the Americas.

In the recent presidential election, the union leaders backed Handal (former head of the defunct phony leftist "Communist" Party and now head of the FMLN), symbolizing the alliance between the leadership of the FMLN and the union. If Handal had won the election, Vaquerano would have become Minister of Education. Handal represented the wing of the FMLN and of the Salvadoran capitalists that want to diversify their options, seeking closer ties with the European impe-



Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA — Workers who have taken over Zanon factory are asking for support in struggle to keep plant running.

rialists. Also, they want to win us to the illusion that elections can solve our problems.

In this upcoming convention, PLP teachers plan to make communist ideas a mass issue, showing that purely trade union politics, by their very nature, can never destroy the capitalist system. The building of a mass PLP and the widespread distribution of DESAFIO is the best education teachers can receive. ☸

JAKARTA, INDONESIA

'Lesser Evils' Murder Millions

In this country's first direct presidential election, Susilo Bambang Yodhoyono (SBY), defeated his old boss, the incumbent Megawati Soekarnoputri. SBY, a retired army general and former Minister for Security and Political Affairs, has been accused of war crimes against the people of East Timor. His election is being hailed as a "success for democracy" in the world's fourth most populous country, with the largest Muslim population. SBY is promising local bosses and imperialist investors he'll open up Indonesia even more as a source of cheap labor with nearly 40 million unemployed. He plans to "get tough" on domestic terrorism and political corruption to provide a more stable situation in which to exploit this cheap labor. As one of the world's most culturally diverse countries, with a history of racist violence, Indonesia will be an easy target for bosses seeking to play one group against another to depress wages.

Indonesia has a history of ruthless dictatorships following its independence from the Dutch and Japanese imperialists after World War II. In 1955 the government held the first and only general election. The Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) had a huge base and led most unions and other mass organizations. They held the government's #2 post under President Sukarno, who was backed by the fascist military.

On Sept. 30, 1965, General Suharto, commander of the Army Strategic Reserves Command, used the killing of seven high-ranking army officers (linking it to the PKI) as an excuse to launch the largest anti-communist massacre in history. They slaughtered nearly one million PKI members and their families, with targets supplied by the CIA.

In 1966, Suharto assumed power. His fascist military regime, supported by U.S. imperialism and Soviet state capitalism (opposed to the pro-Chinese Indonesian communists), outlawed the PKI. In December 1975, U.S. president Gerald Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger gave Suharto the "green light" to invade the small island of East Timor which had recently gained independence from Portugal. Fretilin was the Marxist political party leading the East Timorese independence movement. The Indonesian military killed over 200,000 East Timorese during the invasion and subsequent 25-year occupation.

Suharto remained in power until May 21, 1998 when the Asian financial meltdown, student-led protests and brutal rioting throughout Jakarta and other major cities ousted him. Although recent administrations have promised to prosecute those responsible for the atrocities committed under Suharto, they've only widened the war against the people. In August 1999, the Indonesian military again slaughtered civilians and destroyed towns in East Timor, forcing a third of the population to flee. In 2003, Sukarnoputri declared martial law in a province of North Sumatra called Aceh, which contains huge gas and oil deposits and



sits astride the Straits of Malacca, through which oil tankers reach China, Japan and the rest of the Far East.

Weeks before the run-off election, the Islamic Defense Front, a fascist pro-government group used by the military to incite ethnic and religious riots, held an anti-U.S. protest in Jakarta to protest a planned meeting between U.S. President Bush and Muslim leaders. They called for ending diplomatic relations with the U.S. and a boycott of Indonesia's presidential election. Others wanted to elect an Islamic fundamentalist. As Indonesia pursues the prosecution of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, the 66-year-old Muslim cleric accused of leading an al Qaeda-linked group, Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), it's clear that many Indonesians support him and the building of a right-wing, anti-Western, pro-Islamic state. JI has been blamed for the Bali bombings, the Marriott Hotel attack and the suicide car bombing outside the Australian embassy this past September.

Challenging this are the pro-democratic student groups such as the PRD (Partia Rakyat Demokratik — The People's Democratic Party), who led the street demonstrations for Suharto's removal and bore the brunt of the retaliatory attacks by military and fascist thugs that killed many students in May 1998.

It is ironic that the Muslim fundamentalism built here with CIA help to "fight communism" could come to power through a Presidential ticket led by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. This could turn the Indonesian archipelago into an anti-U.S., fundamentalist-run region. The chickens come home to roost once again.

All this spells more death and super-exploitation for all workers and youth in Indonesia. The former communist movement made the deadly error of uniting with "lesser evil" bosses like Sukarno. They paid for it in blood. Today, a new communist-led movement must be built, uniting all workers and youth and fighting for a society without any bosses: that's the goal of the communist PLP; join us! ☸

History Lessons Teach Students How to Fight War

Recently I taught History to special education students in a Queens, NY high school. In this week-long unit, our class studied manifest destiny, the war with Mexico and the acquisition of most of southern and western United States. The textbook I had to use makes blatantly false statements. About Native American genocide and being forced onto reservations, the book states: "Some Native Americans were misplaced from their homes; some were even killed."

When discussing manifest destiny — that the U.S. has the "God-given right" to conquer all of North America — students tied manifest destiny in 1845 to manifest destiny today in the Middle East. They cited the war in Iraq, as well as U.S. corporations reaping profits there.

The textbook uses racism to justify the U.S. invasion of Mexico, saying Mexicans were "uncivilized and inferior." It says Mexicans disagreed with U.S. ideas of "self-government," and attacked the U.S. Actually, the U.S. military attacked on the Rio Grande, part of Mexico at the time.

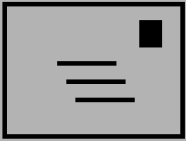
But the textbook failed to mention several facts, firstly, that the Mexican War was a dispute over slavery. I asked students to write a slaves' perspective living in Texas, and who they would prefer to control it. One student replied that it didn't matter; either way she'd still be a slave, no matter who held the chains.

Secondly, the book didn't state it was a war between the Mexican upper class and the U.S. upper class. The textbook portrayed the war as all workers banding together to fight "the enemy." In reality, it was the poor who fought (an economic draft?). We also discussed military recruiters being offered \$2 for every recruit (a large sum in 1845). There were frequent desertions and mutinies among U.S. troops.

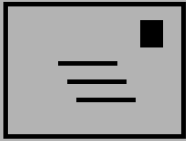
Another student noted that recruiters still receive commissions for every recruit. He pointed to a Latin JROTC member in the class and said, "I'm not going to Iraq to kill another poor person." The class erupted in heated discussion.

Afterwards, the cooperating teacher told me these students don't need to know the truth. "The truth won't be on the regents. They can't handle this stuff. So stick to the textbook." I was also told to stop pronouncing the names of towns and people with a "Spanish accent," because "it was inappropriate."

At the end of the week, the class took the exam. Every student passed, even though the average grade is usually in the twenties. The essay question was: "Why did the United States go to war with Mexico?" Significantly, one student wrote, "Capitalism." ☸



LETTERS



Military Moms Oppose War

I meet with a group of military families opposed to the Iraq War. At first, I mostly exchanged e-mails with one member. Eventually, she invited me to join her at an anti-war march. I helped her carry a banner saying, "Bring Them Home Now!" (Her son was in Iraq then.)

Soon afterwards we attended a peace vigil where I met a few more members of her group. Some wanted to have monthly meetings. At the most recent one there was a struggle about the organization's future. I proposed we hold a rally outside the local Army base on March 19 or 20, the second anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. There's already one planned at Ft. Bragg, N.C. I also proposed we canvas the apartment complexes around the base where many military families live, distributing leaflets about the rally and our organization.

These suggestions were seriously debated at the meeting, and in subsequent e-mails. Some opposed my ideas, saying we'll be seen as "outsiders" and the brass will tell people to stay away from us. They said we'll get the military wives and their husbands "in trouble" if we urge them to join us or participate in any way. People liked the same old tactic of bringing our demands to politicians. (One of my ideas was accepted, a demand to drop charges against the members of the 343rd Quartermaster Co. who refused to transport fuel in unar-

mored trucks through hostile territory.)

I feel the future of this organization is in question. We can remain a smallish group of families who correspond over the internet and rely on politicians to bring our soldiers home and end the war; or we can reach out to the masses of military families who live in poverty around these bases. It's crucial that we involve these largely black and Latin soldiers and their families.

Neither peace marches nor politicians will end the war. N. Y. Times columnist Thomas Friedman wrote (11/21) if the morale of U.S. troops in Iraq falls, it will influence when the war will end. Actually, if the level of the insurgency intensifies and the refusals of GI's to carry out orders grow into a mass rebellion (as in Vietnam), that will determine when the war will end.

I would like to hear about other folks' experiences involved in similar struggles around the country. We should encourage people to join such organizations. Young people who have siblings or spouses could join also.

The struggle will sharpen. We need to be there to fight for reliance on rank-and-file soldiers. I'm confident these families will see that PLP offers the only strategy to ultimately end imperialist wars.

A MILITARY MOM

China: Rampaging Capitalism

On a recent visit to China to see a friend teaching in an exchange program we saw what capitalism looks like in its most rampant form. Social relations have broken down. Communities are being torn up by developers. While people inside their homes are very hospitable, never let you pay for anything and give whatever they have since a business relationship is not involved, outside the home capitalism's values trump everything. As in the U.S., there is mostly mindless TV.

Most cities we visited are an unregulated collection of endless buildings, co-ops and condos for a lot of rich people, but overwhelmingly people have crap. We saw people trying to mimic Americans, flaunting a lot of big-time spending, but that's a small number compared to the entire 1.4 billion population.

Hundreds populate the streets with knapsacks, a "sub-species" who have little or nothing to eat. There's a certain amount of "make work" to put pennies into the hands of the poor, but thousands line the streets bargaining, begging one to buy what is really cheap junk. They are very poor; they're lucky to make a sale or two a day. Medical care is greatly reduced, compared to revolutionary China.

Much of the contact with people inescapably involves being sold something. Virtually everything is a rip-off. Although the "law" says nothing pre-1947 can be taken out of the country, we were still being offered "200-year-old antiques." All of it is fake, including clothing.

Basically the capitalist government is sucking the countryside to support the cities. Peasants are not paid what their produce is worth. Men and women are

driven to the cities to work erecting the endless buildings, going from site to site to find work. Construction goes on 24 hours a day.

We saw a lot of racism directed against the Ughir people, Muslims, or non-Han. In the city of Xian in the Muslim quarter, we saw cops beating a man unmercifully. He escaped but they caught him and beat him again, while a lot of people were yelling at the cops.

Inside the schools there was a beautiful atmosphere because it didn't involve a business relationship. Mainly English, science and math are taught — little humanities or history. Education is ostensibly "free," but millions of peasants who have been driven to the cities are not considered "residents," and must pay for their children's education. But even those for whom schooling is "free" must pay for the final exams. If they can't afford the fees, they can't get a diploma.

In a country in which to become rich is glorified, the government blocks out any criticism. All stuff from the outside is jammed. Nationalism has replaced whatever internationalist outlook most people might have had. While there is widespread feeling against the war in Iraq, the government would rather keep criticism of the U.S. low-key at this point. So given the strong nationalism pervading the country, most people appear to take their cue from the government and keep their criticism of the war muted as well.

If ever a people needed a communist revolution, it's here.

GREYING RED TRAVELERS

'No Fascist Death Squad Left Behind'

On October 12, hundreds of thousands of workers marched throughout Colombia in a one-day general strike against the Uribe government that has been complicit in the many murders of trade unionists by right-wing death squads. Soon afterwards, Bush visited Colombia to support the Uribe government, one of the few loyal allies of the U.S. in South America, where Chinese, European and even Russian imperialists are making inroads. Typically, U.S. bosses choose the worst cutthroats they can find, like the death squads and Uribe, who have turned Colombia into the world's most dangerous place for trade union activists (along with many other workers and even children). Twenty-three teacher-unionists have been murdered over the past year, mostly women.

On the day of the general strike, the union representing faculty at the City University of New York (PSC) held a spirited picket line at the Colombian embassy in support of the general strike and the Colombian teachers' union, FECODE. Those of us at the rally were inspired to be demonstrating on behalf of our sisters and brothers in Colombia.

Now the death squads are threatening reprisals. The AUC sent a letter to Colombian university staff union with the names of six teacher/unionists they will execute, warning, "That all other members of this organization must renounce their membership now. The trade union must disappear." This is a chilling example of the fate of unions under fascism.

The university union, SINTRAUNICOL, are asking U.S. workers to write President Alvaro Uribe Velez at auribe@presidencia.gov.co demanding he protect the targeted unionists (with a copy to the union). Activists are using this letter-writing campaign to build awareness of events in Colombia and to organize a solidarity movement. But it will have little effect on Uribe, who is from a prominent ranching family with close ties to both the paramilitaries and billionaire drug traffickers. Uribe came to power on a platform of using billions of dollars of U.S. military aid — Plan Colombia, begun under Clinton — to crush the guerrilla groups that now operate in 40% of the country and to protect oil pipelines and the international oil companies operating here.

We should alert our students, co-workers and neighbors about how the U.S. "democratic" rhetoric is belied by support of fascist repression in Colombia.

NYC TEACHER'

Fascism: by Choice or Contradiction?

An important letter entitled "Is This Fascism?" in CHALLENGE (9/8/04) essentially, even if not intentionally, challenged our Party's line that fascism only grows out of capitalism in crisis. The author seemingly agrees there are no "lesser-evil" bosses and that fascism is instituted by the whole ruling class. But he/she then argues that because of the failure of the old communist movement and the general historical "weakness" of the working class — only



10% of the workers are unionized — the bosses, are not threatened by the workers. Since they also are not endangered by any other imperialist power, they are rather *choosing to implement* fascism "because they can," to further strengthen their political control and increase their profits. I feel this analysis contains fundamental and dangerous errors.

Inter-imperialist rivalry, intensified by capitalism's inherent contradictions, has shaken the U.S. economically and politically. World overproduction and the falling rate of profit have decreased the bosses' industrial base in the U.S. Since January 2001, the U.S. has lost 2.5 million manufacturing jobs. From 1995 to 2003, the Steel Industry alone has lost approximately 50,000 jobs, a 30% decrease from only 171,000 jobs (which was down from 400,000 in 1980!). The consequence? Racist unemployment comparable to depression times and a nearly \$500 billion trade deficit: the sign of a relatively declining and increasingly unstable economy. Add to this, military failure in Iraq (also devastating economically), an army that fewer working-class youth are rushing to join, the rise of the euro, and a booming China, and the U.S. bosses' political prestige doesn't look so hot either. Now, add to the picture these factors:

- From 1998 to 2003, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the "Protective Services" sector (Homeland Security) has grown 15%. More specifically, from 1998 to 2003, there's been a 16% increase in cops on the street (from 513,040 to 609,920 — 96,920 more cops!), a 39% increase in police detectives, a 7% increase in "correctional" officers and jailers (from 387,930 to 417,420) and a nearly 50% increase in bailiffs.

- July 22nd, 2004, "Homeland Security's Best Kept Secret" (US Newswire 7/23) — the "Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act of 2004" — was signed into law by President Bush with bi-partisan support. Backed by the LEAA, a fascist cop organization, it's estimated that with this bill one million off-duty and retired cops will now not only be armed, but also practically federalized by the ruling class. Any off-duty or retired police officer can now carry concealed weapons and "do their job" — oppress the working class, especially the black and Latin portions of it — anywhere in the U.S.

Thus, it's evident that "fascism" is not a choice. Rather, it has a material basis of intensifying contradictions propelling its development. Over-emphasizing the bosses' choice for fascism is dangerous because it is the same error committed by

continued on next page

MORE LETTERS

the old communist movement. It implies lesser-evil politics — revisionism — and we should avoid it.

A COMRADE

PLP Sparks Campus Action vs. Iraq War

“At the same time that the U.S. government is attacking Fallujah, seizing their hospital, and ripping patients out of their beds, the same ruling class is closing hospitals here in Los Angeles to pay for their war. Thousands of poor workers will die here because of lack of medical care....The madness of this war and...of these budget cuts only reflect the madness of the entire capitalist system — a system that will stop at nothing to protect its profits, a system that has no limit to the amount of suffering it will inflict on the workers of the world.”

This was part of a speech given by a comrade who helped organize a small but spirited demonstration on a large working-class college campus the day after the invasion of Fallujah began. Most people in the campus anti-war group are still deeply depressed over the election. This event helped lift some of them out of their daze. A group that was bigger than expected, given the speed of the planning, participated and another 400 students took our leaflets. A combination of these direct actions led by PLP and a sober anti-imperialist, communist analysis of the world situation will help to resuscitate the faltering anti-war movement and push it in a more revolutionary direction, as well as lead to PLP’s growth.

Alongside disappointment and disillusionment, an interesting shift is beginning. People who were uninterested in hearing about fascism a year ago are now much more ready to discuss it. People who wouldn’t have made time for a study group on imperialism are now making time. We’re building upon this shift and planning more study groups and forums to help the people we’ve been working with move from the reformist anybody-but-Bush mindset to a revolutionary outlook.

In other schools in the area, leaflets were distributed exposing the murderous invasion of Falluja and supporting the members of the 343rd who refused their orders. This has stimulated lots of interest and discussion.

LA RED YOUTH

Communist Recalls Mussolini Execution

CHALLENGE brings out the best in people. One day I was selling the paper outside the phone company building where I work when an older lady approached me and asked, “Is this a communist newspaper?” “Yes,” I replied. “Well,” she said proudly, “I was a communist in Italy during World War II, when they dragged the executed fascist dictator Mussolini and his mistress through the streets of Milan.” A proper fate for all fascists.

OAKLAND COMRADE

WW2 GI’s Rejected Bosses’ Orders to Fight Soviets

After hearing about the atrocities in Falluja, I spoke to a veteran comrade who had a bright view of the potential for turning a bad situation into its opposite.

At the end of World War II, U.S. rulers wanted President Truman to send the U.S. troops who had fought the fascists in Italy to Manchuria to fight the Soviet Red Army. The GI’s composed the following words to the tune of Lily Marlene:

Please Mr. Truman, won’t you send us home.
We have conquered Naples,
We have conquered Rome.
We have subdued the Master Race,
So please give us some shipping space
And send us home.

Many thousands of these GI’s then threw their guns into the Mediterranean. They didn’t fight the Russians. They went home.

This was one of many incidents of soldiers rejecting the bosses’ orders en masse and taking the side of the international working class. In the face of the fascist attacks in Fallujah and throughout Iraq, the history of soldiers’ standing up against fascist, racist imperialist orders should be told, retold and studied. (See article on Vietnam, page 8) We must do everything in our power to fight for anti-racist, anti-fascist and communist ideas and action among the youth and the entire working class. We have a lot to learn from the past and those who fought for workers’ internationalism and communism in the face of tremendous obstacles.

A COMRADE

Basketball Brawl Blocks Real Class Struggle

The Romans had the spectacle of the Christians vs. the lions, but we’re stuck with the tawdry brawl of drunken fans and pro-basketball player Ron Artest. Capitalist culture has dipped so low that even the “diversions” lack character. Arguments rage over whether Artest’s suspension was fair, while we’re supposed to ignore U.S. military razing an entire Iraqi city of 300,000. The question isn’t who’s more at fault between Artest and fan louts — they’re all no good. What we must reject is the attempt to make us care more about whether “our” team wins than we care about fighting back against the daily exploitation we face.

Millionaire players and billionaire sports owners have their “struggles” plastered all over the media, while workers’ struggles to make ends meet get little coverage except in CHALLENGE. We have no stake in who gets the lion’s share of sports’ profits — there’s no lesser of two evils. Players in phony unions routinely cross picket lines of workers making less than one percent of the players’ salaries.

Ron Artest was provoked by drunken fans who were probably taking out their frustration with the alienation of life under capitalism, but to say (as some have) that his suspension was racist is an insult to the millions of black workers who face the real super-exploitation on the job and police brutality in their communities. Professional athletes, for the most part, are pampered and excused from any responsibility for their actions so that greedy team owners can get the wins that feed their ego and pocketbooks.

Many of us enjoy watching sport contests, but that doesn’t mean we must take them seriously.

Workers have no pro team of our own, any more than we have a country of our own. Our team is our class. Keeping our eye on the ball means reading CHALLENGE and learning how to struggle and win the class war and not allowing ourselves to be distracted by the sports circus.✱

RED EYE ON THE NEWS

BELOW ARE EXCERPTS FROM MAINSTREAM NEWSPAPERS THAT CONTAIN IMPORTANT INFORMATION:Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly (UK)

Iraqis see oil as US motive

“It is sad to say this, but after 18 months the United States still hasn’t convinced Iraqis that it means well, said Yitzhak Nakash,” the Brandeis University expert on Iraq. “We have never been able to persuade Iraqis that we aren’t there for the oil.” (NYT, 11/11)

Iraq war was long-planned

On Feb. 19, 2002, I visited central command headquarters for a briefing on our mission in Afghanistan... “Senator,” he said, “we are not engaged in a war in Afghanistan. ...Military and intelligence personnel are being redeployed to prepare for an action in Iraq...”

General Franks was telling me this 13 months before the beginning of the combat operation in Iraq... (NYT, 10/24)

10 more years in Iraq?

For months, Iraqi recruits for [police and National Guard] forces have been the victims of assassination and car bombs....

Local American commanders and security officials say...that many are reluctant to show up and do not tell their families where they work; they... present a danger to American troops they fight alongside, and are unreliable because of corruption,

desertion or infiltration.

Given the weak performance of Iraqi forces, any major withdrawal of American troops for at least a decade would invite chaos, a senior Interior Ministry official, whose name could not be used, said in an interview last week. (NYT, 11/30)

US incinerates Iraqis

“Some artillery guns fired white phosphorous rounds that create a screen of fire that cannot be extinguished with water,” the [Washington] Post explained more than 20 paragraphs into the story. “Insurgents reported being attacked with a substance that melted their skin, a reaction consistent with white phosphorous burns.”

The Post quoted a hospital physician, Kamal Hadeethi, who said: “The corpses of the mujaheddin which we received were burned, and some corpses were melted.”

But...Tuesday morning, on NBC’s “Today” show, a network correspondent in Baghdad mentioned phosphorous shells just long enough to say that they are “meant to burn through metal bunkers.” Presumably an account of effects on human beings would not have gone well with viewers’ breakfasts. (Norman Solomon, “Creatons Syndicate,” 11/14)

Hammer & sickle for Bush

Using tear gas and water cannons, riot police officers dispersed hundreds of rock-throwing protesters on Friday after thousands of people had gathered peacefully to demonstrate against the presence of President Bush at a weekend summit meeting here [in Chile]....

“We want Bush to know that he is not welcome here” said Monica Ceron, a college student who was wearing a “Bush Stinks” T-shirt and a red headband...with the words “Down with Bush” and a hammer and sickle. “Our government may want to do business with him, but the Chilean people oppose his genocidal war on Iraq and his designs on Latin America.” (NYT, 11/20)

Red Cross: US tortures

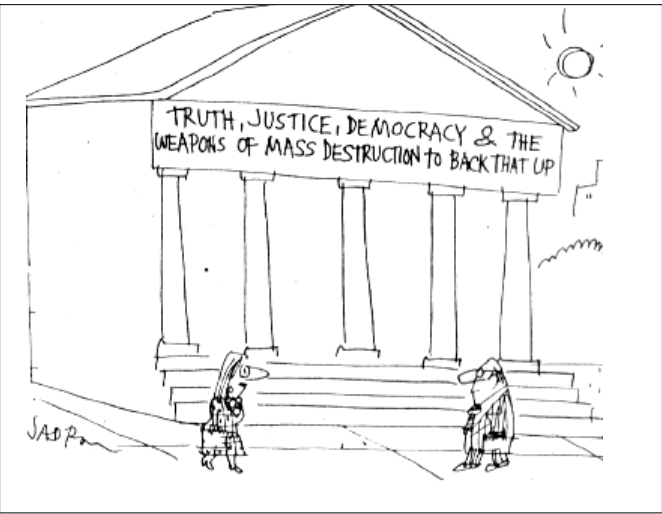
The International Committee of the Red Cross has charged in confidential reports to the United States government that the American military has intentionally used psychological and sometimes physical coercion “tantamount to torture” on pris-

oners at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba....

Some doctors and other medical workers at Guantánamo were participating in planning for interrogations, in what the report called “a flagrant violation of medical ethics.”

Doctors and medical personnel conveyed information about prisoners’ mental health and vulnerability to interrogators, the report said....

The Red Cross said publicly 13 months ago that the system of keeping detainees indefinitely without allowing them to know their fates was unacceptable and would lead to mental health problems. (NYT, 11/30)



HISTORY OF MILITARY REBELLIONS, PART II

ARMED FORCES' MUTINIES DURING THE VIETNAM ERA

By 1971, the U.S. military high command assessed its ability to fight the Vietnam War in the bleakest of terms. In his famous report, Marine Colonel Robert Heinl claimed, "The morale, discipline and battle-worthiness of the US armed forces are, with few salient exceptions, lower and worse than at any time in this century and possibly in the history of the United States." ("Armed Forces Journal," June 1971).

U.S. service personnel resisted, refused and rebelled in a variety of upheavals. By the late 1960's, soldiers in Vietnam had turned "search and destroy" missions — designed to eliminate the Vietnamese opposition — into "search and avoid" endeavors in which U.S. soldiers resisted their official orders. David Cortright reports that lower-ranking soldiers had organized 250 anti-war committees and underground newspapers. By 1969, Cortright claims, the army had ceased to function as an effective fighting force and was disintegrating rapidly. ("Soldiers in Revolt," 1975)

By 1968, the 82nd Airborne, often viewed as one of the Army's most effective fighting units, was under strength. Breaking with precedent, the command ordered soldiers who had just completed a year of Vietnam combat to do a second tour of duty. The crack troops, not known for political protest, complained in massive numbers, and the Army backed off, fearing an embarrassing revolt. As a compromise, the command offered the skilled paratroopers a month's leave if they would accept the Vietnam assignment. Of the 3,650 troops, 2,513 refused the offer, and the 82nd was reduced to a stateside unit. Soldiers were refusing to return and mutinies in Vietnam were rising.

In August 1969, the first reported mass rebellion in Vietnam occurred as 60 army personnel of "A" Company, 3rd Battalion/196th Infantry effectively mutinied. "A" company had incurred heavy casualties in the Songchang Valley south of Da Nang, and the 60 exhausted and angry men refused their captain's orders. Ranking officers quickly arrived to squelch the mutiny and after much cajoling, most of the 60 begrudgingly moved out to their next combat duty station. Despite the overt mutiny, none received any reprimand.

In November, 1969, 21 men of "B" company, 1st platoon refused to advance toward combat at Cu Chi near the Cambodian border. Battle-hardened and nearing the end of their year of duty, the soldiers clearly believed the political goals of the war weren't worth risking their lives.

In April 1970, a 7th cavalry company from the 2nd Battalion refused to advance on an NLF (National Liberation Front) position from a route that would have invited heavy casualties. They utilized "working it out," meaning that the rank-and-file soldiers refused their initial orders and then bargained with their superior officers for alternative plans.

From May 1970, mutinies increased as President Nixon escalated the war by ordering the invasion of Cambodia. On May 7, 16 soldiers, from a camp called Fire Base Washington, refused to advance with their units into Cambodia. On May 11, another group from the 3rd Battalion/8th Infantry refused to board helicopters headed to Cambodia. In December, in "C" Company 2nd Battalion, 501st Infantry, 23 enlisted men with their commanding officer, Lieutenant Fred Pitts, refused what they believed was a dangerous mission. Pitts and the ranking Sergeant were removed from their command; Pitts pleaded guilty "to disobeying a direct order" and received a suspended sentence, a very lenient punishment for mutiny in combat.

By 1971, mutinies escalated and the army high command found sharp resistance from soldiers who defended mutineers, intensifying the rebellion against the brass. In October, six soldiers of "B" company, 1st Battalion/12th Infantry refused a patrol mission near the Cambodian border. When the high command threatened them with court martial, several platoons of soldiers rallied to their defense and refused to advance. Sixty-five men signed a petition condemning their mission as unnecessarily dangerous. Journalist Richard Boyle documents these extraordinary events in his book, "Flower of the Dragon."

Of all U.S. troops in Vietnam, black GIs were the most militant and posed the greatest resistance to U.S. commanders. Cortright states by November, 1970, "...black radicalism had already seriously hindered U.S. fighting capabilities, with brothers very seldom trusted in combat, apparently for fear they might turn their guns around." ("Soldiers in Revolt," pp. 39-40).

Black GI combat refusals were often rooted in a combination of racial politics and anti-war ideologies. Racial tensions did exist between white and black enlistees, but black soldiers demonstrated deep-seated hatred for the discriminatory practices of army brass. In court martial discharges, 23.4% receiving punitive discharges were black; only 16.9% were white.

The two largest military prisons in Vietnam for U.S. soldiers, Da Nang Marine Brig and Long Binh Jail (LBJ) bulged with inmates who suffered overcrowding and harsh conditions. As early as 1968, black prisoners had led the largest military prison revolts in history. At Da Nang, Marine prison inmates seized control of the central prison complex and were only overcome when 120 Marine MPs stormed their barricades. At LBJ, hundreds of soldier inmates waged pitch battles with MPs for several hours; one inmate was killed, 58 inmates and five MPs were wounded, and 23 were hospitalized. Immediately fol-



lowing the pitched battle, approximately 200 black inmates staged a no-work strike and held out for nearly a month.

The refusals, mutinies and prison rebellions no doubt reverberated through the ranks of the armed forces. While the primary revolts were in the Army and Marines, the Air Force and Navy experienced critical revolts.

From May 22 to 25, 1971, Travis Air Force base had the largest mass rebellion in the history of the air force. It began when a confrontation occurred between black personnel and MPs, who arrested a small number. Subsequently, 200 black and white airmen protested against the arrests, and ultimately 600 black and white rebels clashed with MPs. The officers' club was burned. Of 135 GIs arrested, most were black; Travis was in a virtual state of siege for days.

Finally, by 1972, resistance within the Navy intensified, often as sabotage, taking large ships out of commission. On July 10, 1972, a huge fire was ignited on the USS Forrestal, docked in Norfolk, inflicting over \$7 million damage and delaying its deployment by two months. Just three weeks later, sabotage on the USS Ranger caused a three-and-one-half-month deployment delay; sailors had placed twelve-inch bolts in the ship's gears.

These two sabotages and delayed deployments set the stage for a violent uprising aboard the USS Kitty Hawk. The ship had just completed its Vietnam mission and was to return home, but because the Forrestal and Ranger were out of commission, the Kitty Hawk was ordered to return to Vietnam. Hundreds of African-American sailors led a rebellion that left dozens injured and seriously undermined the ship's operations. Just weeks later, a non-violent strike on the USS Constellation occurred as the ship was docked in San Diego. Over 100 black and white sailors protested racism and bad discharges. The Navy, desperately seeking to avoid violent revolt, buckled and reassigned many dissidents to shore duty. ☸

Students Know a Racist System When They See One

NEW YORK CITY -Recently I had the opportunity to introduce some of our communist politics to high school junior English classes, teaching a lesson in intensifying the contradictions between the school curriculum and communist politics. Our school is completely segregated; 80% of the students live in poverty.

Students worked in groups to identify and analyze societal conflicts, picking issues like poverty, racism and war. Searching for sample editorials students could use as models to practice editorial writing, I found one on-line claiming "The Draft Will Not Make a Comeback." I combined that with two others, one criticizing John Kerry as pro-draft and one from CHALLENGE. I then let my students argue it out.

Student groups each analyzed a different editorial and gave presentations to the class. The discussions showed: (1) black and Latin youth don't trust the government and want nothing to do with fighting a bosses' war (only one student in two classes — a JRROTC

recruit — voiced any support for the war and he was drowned out so much he changed his mind!); (2) students have many questions about the power the bosses have over them ("Can we go to Canada or the Dominican Republic?" to avoid a draft); (3) youth generally (like the working class as a whole) still feel immobilized when it comes to making a break with the capitalist lifestyle. They want solutions to come to them, that is, through elections as opposed to direct action.

They also have difficulty understanding the deeper political issues raised by PLP and with the reading level of CHALLENGE. These obstacles, however, are simply part of a process of their political development under the leadership of our Party, in this case, my leadership as their teacher. They're learning!

There's a saying that opportunity knocks loudest when one is prepared. The next week a major newspaper did a full-page feature spread on the possibility of the draft, complete with a large picture of a recruitment poster that read: "We Really, Really, Really Want

You."

Meanwhile, we found a major international magazine featuring our neighborhood in its latest issue. The topic? Military recruitment. Among a swamp of openly vicious racist stereotypes, the article claimed the military can't meet its goals in the cities because the "target population" can't speak English, and "the majority are illegal immigrants, convicted criminals, or both." There was even a racist/sexist slur against teenage mothers. One recruiter sickly lamented that youth from the city "not only want the army, they need the army."

The students were furious. We discussed how capitalism needs to build racism while simultaneously needing black and Latin youth to support capitalism — a contradiction.

We decided to write letters to the magazine's editor. I was careful to explain how publishers of such magazines are tied to the same ruling class that pushes these wars, and how the working class needs its own ways of "publishing" our ideas. The students' letters

were their best work of the semester, and, for some, the best of their lives.

I fought for students to participate in a march and demonstration against the war at the neighborhood recruiting center. Two came. We used the opportunity to denounce to thousands of passers-by the racism of military recruitment, the need to destroy capitalism and the bosses' need for imperialist wars for profit. One student read her letter over the megaphone, despite her mother's fears. A young comrade in our club also wrote, rehearsed, and delivered a powerful speech representing the views of communist youth.

This project has opened the doors to discussing the war in Iraq and issues such as the soldiers who refused orders. We made a school bulletin board that sparked more discussion. We also have a Party study group with four new youth recruits to the Party. The struggle is intensifying! ☸